

# Veterinarians Support HB 231 Ban on Declawing Cat

*After HB231 passed a House vote with 225 supporting and 147 opposed, veterinarians in New Hampshire are thrilled about much-needed regulations to protect cats.*

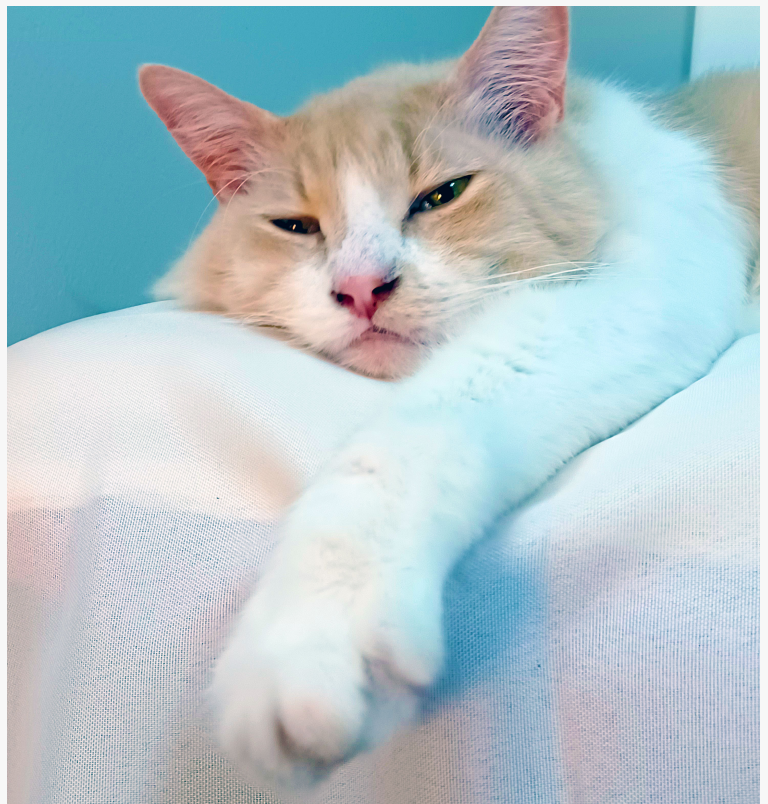
CONCORD, NEW HAMPSHIRE, UNITED STATES, March 16, 2023

/EINPresswire.com/ -- New legislation seeks to ban the practice of cat declawing statewide. The bill, HB231, recently passed a House vote with 225 supporting and 147 opposed. Many veterinarians in New Hampshire are thrilled about this much-needed regulation to protect cats, but the New Hampshire Veterinary Medical Association (NHVMA) opposes the bill.

Dr. Karen Campbell, a veterinarian who practices in Port City, wants the NHVMA to change their position and support the bill.

She says legislation that explicitly bans

declawing cats is urgently needed. "Declawing has been outlawed in many places because it's a painful and debilitating procedure," she says. Declaw bans have been passed in five countries and two states, and similar bans were recently introduced in Illinois and Massachusetts.



A 13-year-old cat who has never been declawed.

“

Declawing has been outlawed in many places because it's a painful and debilitating procedure.”

*Dr. Karen Campbell*

According to a study published in the Journal of the American Veterinary Association, [33%](#) of cats suffer at least one behavioral problem after declaw or tendonectomy surgery. “Sadly,” Campbell says, “as long as it remains legal in New Hampshire, those determined to have their cat declawed will pressure veterinarians into performing the procedure, or they’ll shop around until they find someone who will.”

Dr. Crystal Heath, co-founder of the veterinary advocacy group Our Honor, says the NHVMA's opposition doesn't represent the sentiments of many veterinarians. "Declawing isn't a veterinary procedure; it's mutilation, leading to long-term physical and behavioral problems that often cause owners to surrender their animals." It's been over 20 years since the first declaw ban was passed in West Hollywood, California in 2003. "Since then, we've seen how this legislation successfully protects cats, the public, and veterinarians." As a shelter veterinarian, Heath sees many declawed cats relinquished to the shelter due to biting and house-soiling post-declaw. "These behaviors make declawed cats difficult to place into new homes."

A 2022 study (<https://pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/34514907/>) found that after a declaw ban was passed in British Columbia, there was no change in the amount of cats relinquished to the animal shelter system, disproving claims that declaw bans put cats at risk.

Drs. Campbell and Heath are urging those who want to support the bans to visit <https://www.gencourt.state.nh.us/house/members/> to find contact information for your representative and tell them you support HB231. Alley Cat Allies has a simple form to contact your representatives on their website <https://p2a.co/TXZx4bK>.

The Paw Project has set up a petition on Change.org (<https://www.change.org/p/stop-declawing-in-new-hampshire>) for the public to express support for the bill.

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